

December 2020 #20-41

Summary:

This is a critical time of year for many Oregon businesses. With new COVID-19 restrictions in place, some local businesses are looking to holiday shoppers to help them survive the harsh pandemic through innovative means.

Word Count: 461

“Despite the governor’s freeze on many activities, entrepreneurs have found creative ways to provide support for Oregon businesses during the holiday season.”

Shopping in a Shutdown: How to Support Local Businesses

By Helen Duran

The Oregonian reported that an estimated 51,000 more Oregonians are expected to [lose their jobs](#) because of Governor Brown’s new state-wide freeze. To make matters worse, almost 70,000 Oregonians could lose their unemployment benefits the day after Christmas when the program for self-employed workers and an extended benefit program expire.

There is hope for small businesses. According to an [Adobe survey](#), small businesses in the United States could expect a +107% boost in revenue for the season. In fact, 51% of shoppers plan to support small and local businesses on Small Business Saturday, and 38% of shoppers “will make a deliberate effort to shop at smaller retailers throughout the holiday season.”

Despite the governor’s freeze on many activities, entrepreneurs have found creative ways to provide support for Oregon businesses during the holiday season. Small businesses that are not equipped to make a profit online are provided an outlet through such non-profits as [Built Oregon](#), which provides vendors a shared online marketplace to showcase their products. In true Oregonian spirit, you can buy anything from Willamette Valley wines to bamboo toothbrushes and leather toolkits.

Gyms have been shut down entirely during the governor’s winter freeze. But that hasn’t stopped gyms like Fulcrum Fitness, which has gone completely virtual with its workouts for customers.

Restaurants have suffered extraordinarily from the pandemic, and with the new freeze, some restaurants and bars are planning to close temporarily rather than switch to delivery and takeout. Others are hoping the holiday spirit will provide them a much needed boost. Andina’s in Portland offered a take-out Thanksgiving dinner for those not partial to imitating Gordan Ramsey in the kitchen. Bars like the Botanist House also provided beer, wine, and cider to-go the day before Thanksgiving.

(over)



Even the local arts community has found creative ways to share its passion. The youth orchestra, Metropolitan Youth Symphony, will be celebrating holiday music from around the world through a creative use of online tickets and YouTube. The local ballet company, Oregon Ballet Theatre, is reimagining its annual Nutcracker through a televised format on OBTV.

Clearly, in the middle of a turbulent year, Oregon businesses' innovation and creativity shine through, despite the heavy weight of lockdowns and restrictions. Even so, the next few months will be critical for many local businesses. Oregonians should rally behind their local businesses this holiday season. That might be the Christmas miracle we all need.

Helen Doran is the Program Assistant, External Affairs at Cascade Policy Institute, Oregon's free-market public policy research organization.

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